

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15

SCI-06 OMB-01 SS-15 RSR-01 /125 W

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R 242103Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8054

INFO DEA HQS

USCINCSO

GOV PANCANAL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 3909

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA ESTABLISHES DRUG ABUSE PROGRAM

SUMMARY: GOP OFFICIALS HAVE ESTABLISHED NATIONAL COMMITTEE STRUCTURE TO DEAL WITH DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM AMONG YOUTH IN PANAMA. U.S. NARCOTICS OFFICIALS WERE INVITED TO MEETING CONVENED JULY 17 TO ANNOUNCE AND EXPLAIN GOP'S ACTION PLAN. DURING MEETING GOP OFFICIALS FOR FIRST TIME ADMITTED TO U.S. OFFICIALS THAT PANAMANIAN YOUTH ALSO HAVE DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM. END SUMMARY

1. DEA AGENTS EDWARD HEATH AND LUIS GONZALEZ WERE INVITED BY LT. COL NORIEGA, G-2 OF PANAMANIAN NATIONAL GUARD TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO A MEETING AT MINISTRY OF EDUCATION JULY 17. AT THE MEETING MORIEGA UNVEILED A PLAN TO FIGHT NARCOTICS ABUSE AMONG PANAMANIAN YOUTH. IT INCLUDED ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL AND SUBORDINATE COMMITTEES WORKING ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM. PLAN INCLUDES CONTROLS ON DRUGS PRESENTLY OBTAINABLE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION IN PHARMACIES. IN ADDITION TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NORIEGA, FOLLOWING GOP OFFICIALS PARTICIPATED IN THE

MEETING: DENI DIRECTOR DARIO AROSEMENA; LIC. CARLOS SANDOVAL, CHIEF PROSECUTOR FOR NARCOTICS CASES; OLMEDO DOMINGO, VICE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, AND MINED DEPARTMENT HEADS. PLAN ENCOMPASSES ACTIONS AT UNIVERSITY, SECONDARY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVELS.

2. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE INCLUDES THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERALL CONTROL AND SUPPORT COMPOSED OF LT. COL. NORIEGA, LIC. SANDOVAL AND DENI DIRECTOR AROSEMENA. THE GN WILL PROVIDE SUPPORT. DENI WILL PROVIDE CONTROL AND SANDOVAL WILL ADVISE THEM OF NEED FOR CHANGES IN LAWS OR NEW LAWS AND OF PROBLEMS PASSED ON FROM THE WORK COMMITTEE.

3. THE WORK COMMITTEE WILL DEAL WITH DRUG RELATED PROBLEMS AT THE STUDENT LEVEL BY WORKING THROUGH A UNIVERSITY ACTION COMMITTEE, A HEALTH DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE AND A STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE. IT WILL HAVE POWER OF DECISION AND BE BACKED UP BY THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE. MORE DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE WORKINGS OF THE NARCOTICS CONTROL STRUCTURE WILL BE MADE JULY 25.

SAICS HEATH AND GONZALEZ HAVE BEEN ASKED FOR ADVICE ON OPERATION OF PROGRAM.

4. COMMENT. GOP'S ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT HAS BEEN GAINING MOMENTUM IN RECENT WEEKS. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL AND SUBSIDIARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM ENCOMPASSING LEGAL, POLICE AND EDUCATION SECTORS IS ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD INVOLVING AGENCIES OF GOP IN DOMESTIC DRUG ABUSE PROGRAM. WE CONSIDER THE ADMISSION TO U.S. OFFICIALS THAT PANAMA TOO HAS DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM AMONG ITS YOUTH TO BE POSITIVE FACTOR REFLECTING CLOSE AND EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP SAIC HEATH HAS DEVELOPED WITH NORIEGA IN NARCOTICS AREA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PANAMA03909
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730714/aaaaakcm.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <12 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PANAMA ESTABLISHES DRUG ABUSE PROGRAM SUMMARY: GOP OFFICIALS HAVE ESTABLISHED NATIONAL
TAGS: SNAR, PN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005